

## CHARLES HOWARD

Charlie Howard is the transportation planning director for the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), a position that he has held since February 1, 2005. Prior to joining PSRC, Charlie worked with the Washington State Department of Transportation for 18 years, most recently as the director of strategic planning and programming. He has been involved in state and regional transportation issues for the past 22 years, including an active role in developing and implementing the state's Growth Management Act. Charlie is a graduate of Ohio State University and has a master's degree in city and regional planning from Harvard University.

Charlie's role in the development of the Growth Management Act in Washington was as the planning director for the Washington State Department of Transportation. Through the state transportation planning process, he facilitated the development of policy recommendations, which became the major elements of the transportation planning portions of the GMA.



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<b>Interview with:</b>	<b>Charles Howard</b>
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<b>Interviewed by:</b>	<b>Diane Wiatr</b>
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### **Tape 1, Side**

**Diane Wiatr:** This interview with Charlie Howard is about the history of Washington State's Growth Management Act (GMA). The date is August 12, 2005, and the interview is taking place at Puget Sound Regional Council in Seattle. My name is Diane Wiatr, and I will be interviewing Charlie Howard today.

**Diane:** Charlie, what interest did you have in land use planning and growth management before the passage of the Growth Management Act?

**Charles Howard:** Okay, I started working for the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) in 1987—and we had started a planning process then. There was quite a bit of interest amongst the transportation community, legislators, and others in doing some long-range planning. The department had not done planning, they'd actually eliminated planning in the early 1980s because the feeling was they weren't going to get any more capital improvement dollars, and so it was going to become a maintenance-only organization.

We started taking a look at what the big issues were in transportation and we identified ten major issues. One of them was the linkage between land use and transportation. We set up a planning process to start addressing those issues. It was called a State Transportation Policy Plan and we started working on those.

We had a steering committee that included legislators, our transportation commissioners, other transportation interests, and we had subcommittees set up to deal with the various issues. One of them was on land use and transportation and that group started to look at what was going on in other parts of the county.

We used Florida as an example. We looked at what was going on in Oregon as well and started to make some recommendations on how we could improve the linkage between land use and transportation. So that was

our foray into this.

We had another group that was working on regional transportation planning and had made recommendations to develop a regional program—a statewide regional transportation program—and so those two things kind of went in parallel. There was some legislative interest—that eventually got rolled into the Growth Management Act as the regional transportation planning organization provisions. And then the other recommendations that came out of the land use and transportation [subcommittee] formed the basis for the transportation part of the Growth Management Act in 1990. That work, basically, took place during 1988 and 1989.

**Diane:** And what role did you play in the passage of the GMA?

**Charles:** What role did I play? I worked coordinating, and helped to draft the transportation planning provisions. Again, those were based on some recommendations that we had come up with, with our State Transportation Policy Plan both on regional planning as well as the land use transportation linkage, so that was the local comprehensive plan requirements. So I worked on those, helping draft.

I worked pretty closely with the Growth Strategies Commission that was established to make these recommendations—the Legislature kind of preempted them by passing something in 1990 so I was pretty active in working with that group as well.

**Diane:** As an advisor or were you on the board?

**Charles:** I wasn't on the board. I was, more or less, an advisor following their work on transportation.

**Diane:** What's your most interesting memory of the dynamics of the events leading to the enactment of the GMA?

**Charles:** Well, I think there was a lot of surprise that transportation was taking such a lead role. It didn't surprise me, but it surprised other people. When Joe King originally came up with the idea, and he started talking about wanting a growth management act in the state, one of his anecdotes that he used was being stuck in traffic on 405 and looking over and seeing a bunch of new apartments going up and wondering, "Okay, how are these two things linked?"

So transportation, I think, was pretty integral to the growth concerns that the state was facing at the time because basically Seattle's traffic growth really took off in the 1980s and then kind of stayed pretty steady throughout the 1990s. So the 1980s was really the decade that this region started to feel the impacts of congestion and growth. So my most interesting memory is just there were a lot of people working on different aspects of growth management, and transportation seemed to have to claw its way into the fold. We did that by doing some pretty good work and just being there at the right time, but also having Ruth Fisher as the chair of the House Transportation Committee and her interest in all of this.

Ruth really took ownership of this. She really believed in this land use-transportation linkage. She felt frustrated, a bit, because she took this to heart. She understood transportation's critical role in growth management, but she got frustrated that a lot of other people didn't and it was like she was coming—almost uninvited to the table. A lot of the transportation folks felt that way—that there was a group of people who were into planning—the planning directors and other people—who didn't deal with transportation that much and yet transportation made so much progress right before the Growth Management Act passed in recommending a growth management-type of system that would benefit transportation. So Ruth was pretty much the center of all that activity.

Ruth chose to lead this—I mean, for God sakes, we met practically every two weeks for this whole summer putting this thing together—and she was right there doing it. She took ownership of it. She worked it through the commission’s policy plan committee and she said, “We’re going to write a piece of legislation.” And this was even before the Steel Magnolias were formed and all of that, that transportation was ready to move forward on its own with some pieces of transportation legislation that ended up fitting pretty nicely with the rest of the package... But I remember Tom Campbell used to get kind of shocked at what we were coming up with in transportation—sort of, “How did you guys get so progressive?” We were actually way beyond where other peoples’ comfort level was and we just felt like it was the right thing to do. But Ruth was a big piece of that.

**Diane:** What was the original intent of the GMA and why do you think it became law?

**Charles:** Well, let’s see. The original intent of the GMA was to require planning, to actually require there be a linkage between plans and implementing of the zoning codes and actions that were taking place. So I think that that’s really what the original intent was—to at least start a basis of planning that actually linked to actions, or limited actions to what was planned for.

**Diane:** And what in the political climate led to the passage of the GMA?

**Charles:** That was pretty interesting because it was not a political climate, at least in the Legislature, that you think would have led to that because there was a Republican Senate and a Democratic House. Yet there was such tremendous pressure and we saw local elections; for example, Bill Reams was defeated in King County by Brian Derdowski on a growth management platform. You started to have the CAP initiatives take place—CAP in Seattle, Bellevue had something similar. The citizens were starting to be frustrated that there wasn’t more action to coordinate what was going on.

So I think that that really grassroots feeling that something needed to be done really helped the Legislature—even the Republicans in the Senate—recognize that something had to be done. After all, Bill Reams was a Republican—Brian Derdowski was a Republican who beat him and so it was not just a Democratic issue.

**Diane:** Which leads to the next question, what kind of pressure was there from the public to deal with growth management issues?

**Charles:** You had the citizens’ initiatives—the CAP Initiative and those type of things, people saying to their local governments, “You’ve got to address this.” It had to do with reacting to the impact of growth like traffic congestion, seemingly uncoordinated planning—schools that were being built in strange locations, state facilities that were popping up in strange locations.

The other poster child was the UW (University of Washington) Bothell campus location where it just, all of a sudden, got plopped down without seeming to care about what the impacts of that were or at least planning for how you were going to access it. Those were the other items.

You also had different issues around the state. For example—I can’t remember the name—Badger Mountain, I think it is, in Wenatchee. People starting living up there full time, you had school buses that were forced to be sent out there. It was blowing budgets—from the Superintendent for Public Instruction, for sending buses to pick kids up out on the top of a mountain someplace. You had people building cabins in forests and then getting burned out—huge firefighting costs that were occurring. So a lot of those things were adding up to needing to do something to make this growth more rational.

**Diane:** For the record, will you tell us what the CAP Initiative was?

**Charles:** Yeah, the CAP Initiative in Seattle was one that limited the height of downtown buildings. And again, it was brought about by people who were concerned that downtown was growing way too fast, and the amount of development that was being absorbed in downtown Seattle was just way too fast for the city's ability to keep with the demand.

**Diane:** Now we have a series of transportation questions. The first is, how was the transportation section of the GMA drafted?

**Charles:** It was drafted by legislative staff of the Legislative Transportation Committee. They put that together based on recommendations that the State Transportation Policy Plan had made. There were a series of recommendations. Big areas like we need to have a concurrency piece; we needed to have consistency between local actions and capital improvement programs and the local plans; we needed to have that linkage between land use and transportation. There were a series of recommendations that were made and those got drafted into language by the Transportation Committee.

**Diane:** Can you talk a little bit about Ruth Fisher's role?

**Charles:** Well, she was the one who really pushed this. It was her foresight, her recognition of this as an issue, and her taking ownership of the issue from the transportation perspective. She chaired those State Transportation Policy Plan subcommittees on regional planning and land use, and so she was the one who really pushed it and pushed the recommendations and said, "I'll take this and we'll introduce legislation to do this."

**Diane:** You briefly mentioned Florida and Oregon, but what was the thinking on Florida and Oregon's growth management transportation requirements in relationship to what you developed?

**Charles:** I think, out of hand, Oregon was dismissed [laughs] because we don't like to do anything that Oregon does here, we're way too close to Oregon. They have a much different system—top-down system. We didn't think that that would work. We looked at Florida's as a model because Florida had—while they have a stronger state role in Florida than our act does—they require state planning that goes along with it and then it kind of cascades down. There were a lot of elements of Florida's that were similar to what we thought would work here. If you take that top layer off, that's pretty much what we've got is Florida's system. They have a concurrency program in transportation that we adopted. They have the local comp plan requirements: the consistency between Land Use and Transportation Element. So a lot of those were things that we got from Florida.

**Diane:** And what specifically did you hope to achieve for transportation with the Growth Management Act?

**Charles:** First of all, we hoped to achieve a linkage on the local level that the land use decisions made at the local level affected transportation. And you can see that in the act in the language of having to understand the land use impact on the transportation system. So requiring local governments to understand that their actions for zoning—whether it's low-density sprawl or high-density development—have an impact on transportation and they need to internalize that and that's what I think is the most significant... What we were hoping to accomplish was an internalization of that on local governments.

**Diane:** Why was it decided that regional transportation planning organizations would certify the Transportation Element of the comprehensive plan? And how's it working out?

**Charles:** This was an element, I think, that came in 1991. I'm having a foggy memory here, but there wasn't much of an enforcement mechanism in the original 1990 version of the Growth Management Act.

And maybe this was the only enforcement mechanism, was this certification that came through, but it was one of the recommendations that came out of our State Transportation Policy Plan's subcommittee. People on that committee felt that there needed to be some type of a regional consistency check so that all the comp plans would have to go through some type of discussion. While the act required that they be consistent with neighboring jurisdictions, there was no mechanism to do that. This regional organization was the mechanism that was created and this responsibility added into that. Now that I think about it, it was in the original 1990 act that that happened. It was the only enforcement mechanism that was brought forward.

And later on in 1991, other types—you know the growth management hearings boards were created and those types of review mechanisms. I remember having a difficult time convincing the Growth Strategies Commission to look at the transportation side and say, "There's a model here that could work," because they didn't seem to want to look at the transportation piece. They had a pretty negative opinion of transportation; they thought transportation might have been part of the problem. We were trying to make it part of the solution.

**Diane:** Tell us about the discussions on concurrency. Was the topic hotly debated?

**Charles:** You know, it wasn't as hotly debated as I thought it might have been. We had a lot of help from people in Florida—John DeGrove, who had been working in Florida on their concurrency provisions; he was working with the Lincoln Land Institute. We had a lot of interaction with those people about how theirs was working and what happened. They didn't have an urban growth boundary and so what happened in Florida was a real leap-frogging of development. We felt it was important to have the urban growth boundary so that that didn't happen. So in that case, we learned from Florida's experience.

The concurrency also came out of the studies that we did on the policy plan, and the idea was that you needed some type of mechanism to make it real and the currency was definitely that. It was a "truth in planning" requirement—that's how we characterized it. In concurrency you're not required to have a plan to improve facilities. You can adopt a low level of service.

So there's a three-legged stool between the money needed to do things, the transportation projects as they relate to the growth that's taking place in the development, and the level of service standards. The idea was those three things had to be in balance. You could adopt a level of service standard that was low and therefore not impinge development and not have to do any transportation projects, but you had to face the ire of your citizens. So this was a whole balancing act and kind of a truth in planning: "Okay, here's what we're going to plan for and here's the transportation impact. Do we want to (a) improve the system to mitigate those impacts, or (b) accept the impacts and just say, 'We're going to live with more congestion by having lower levels of service standards?'"

**Diane:** How well do you think local governments are doing in developing their transportation elements under the GMA?

**Charles:** The local governments, I think, have really stepped up and done a pretty good job of developing transportation elements. There's been evolving requirements over the years, so there's always something new to be added. I think on the area of how they relate across jurisdictional boundaries is an area that's probably still evolving. Local governments having to get a handle on how their facilities relate to other facilities and how that creates a regional network, but I think that in general they've done a pretty good job of doing that.

**Diane:** Can you give us some examples of local governments that have done a particularly good job?

**Charles:** I think the City of Bellevue has been known for their transportation planning. Obviously they have



one of the major regional growth centers in their jurisdiction, so they've had to deal with the concurrency requirements of that center. They've had to deal with the neighborhood issue and how the neighborhoods access the center, how the neighborhoods' needs are met. So they've had to balance all of that and I think that they've done a pretty good job of doing that, plus they're a pretty active regional player. So I think that Bellevue's done a pretty good job of that.

The new Seattle transportation plan which is just now—I don't think it's finalized yet, but is really taking a hard look at transit service and the GMA had always anticipated that local governments would internalize transit decision making even though service is not provided by cities. It's provided by Metro, for example, in this case. That they would try to internalize that and try to figure out what their land uses needed. I think, if anything, what we are still lacking in transportation is a true marriage of transit and roadway planning. So the idea that they're done together, and both done with the idea of land use in mind, is a good one. There's a number of reasons for that—transit services are delivered by external people, which are public transportation benefit areas, and so it's difficult for that communication to happen. It's happening more and more and we're trying to even improve that connection.

**Diane:** How has the GMA changed the relationship between land use and transportation planning? What differences can be seen on the ground?

**Charles:** Before you had the GMA, there was no connection between the land use plans and the Transportation Element. And the Transportation Element often was an unconnected series of projects. So the GMA's structure requires that you have a land use plan, that's one thing that's important, having a land use plan. Then it requires you to understand the relationship and the implications to transportation and to create a balancing system.

I always called this plan-level concurrency, although a lot of people shy away from that because concurrency is a regulatory term, but the idea that you have in the planning sense, you have to have a balance as well. You have to understand the trip generation and other implications of your land use plan, and you need to understand what that means on your transportation plan to address those concerns. And there has to be a financial element that wraps it all up and says can we afford to make those improvements. So in the grand sense it's like a concurrency management system, but in a planning sense. So there's no regulation that's stopping you, but there is a requirement to balance those two out. And I think we never had that before.

What differences can be seen on the ground from this? The differences are, for one thing, that local jurisdictions all have a land use plan so you can actually go see it. They are required to address the transportation implications. And I think that's led local governments to have a much more well thought out list of projects that they're pursuing in their transportation capital improvement program because they understand the relationships between those two.

**Diane:** So you spoke about local successes, can you tell us something about regional successes in transportation planning?

**Charles:** Yes, transportation is one of those issues that can't be contained within individual local governments. I think that's why the regional component made so much sense at the time. The regional approach was actually a model. The Growth Strategies Commission had been looking for how do we coordinate and everybody got high-centered on what was a region. You had watershed people saying it was watersheds. You had economic units, you had other types of ideas about what would be a "region" and people got all bothered about that.

Creating the RTPOs (regional transportation planning organizations), I think, was probably one of the

better elements of the Growth Management Act. These regional organizations whose job it was to coordinate across jurisdictions to coordinate between the state and local governments. I think they've been pretty successful in creating forums for people in regions and even in rural parts of the state to get together and talk about transportation issues and come up with some agreement on direction. So I think that the RTPO creation was really one of the big successes of the Growth Management Act. We've got 38 of 39 counties participating in those organizations, and they seem to be picking up more and more responsibilities under state law because it's a convenient forum to do that.

The question is, What do we use as a regional boundary? We said it had to be a minimum of a county, that we're going to rely on our political jurisdictions to create at least what those looked like. And it had to have at least 50,000 population—and we did that for a very practical reason, which was we wanted rural counties to group together because there wasn't enough grant money. The idea was that the state would give out grants to fund this planning, and we couldn't do 39 grants and still have some things valuable done so we thought we needed to group. We gave them some flexibility in how they group together and they did the grouping themselves. I think that worked well.

**Diane:** It took a long time to figure out what to do about setting levels of service standards for state-owned facilities. How well has the 1998 legislation HB 1487 been carried out?

**Charles:** House Bill 1487 was a follow-on piece of legislation that was called the Level of Service Bill. It addressed an issue that we had, that we knew was an issue when GMA passed, which is some transportation facilities are of regional significance and some are of statewide significance. So what the bill tried to do is establish which transportation facilities were of statewide significance and then to stratify the responsibility for establishing levels of service standards. And so it clarified that the local governments were to set level of service standards for local facilities. And we had had, after the Growth Management Act passed, some local jurisdictions trying to establish levels of service standards for state highways because they were required to under the act.

What it led to was a patchwork of level of service standards of different types in different places with the same road. So you go from one jurisdiction to another and you all of a sudden have a different standard. And so we came up with the idea that you needed to have some consistency in that, and so the idea was that on highways of statewide significance the state would set those. On other state highways, the region would set those in cooperation with the state. And on local facilities, the local governments would set them. I think that that helps people understand roles and responsibilities.

I think one of the bad things about House Bill 1487, and it was a compromise at the time, was that state highways were exempted—especially highways of statewide significance—from concurrency. That was a request of the cities, so it wasn't the Department of Transportation wanting to get out of something. It was cities, rightfully saying, "How can you hold us accountable to stop development in Bellevue, for example, if 405 is over capacity?" So there was a logic there, but I think there probably would have been a better way to work through that, but that was the compromise.

**Diane:** We're going to move onto some other questions. This one's about the Steel Magnolias. Getting all those committee chairs together is highly unusual so why do you think Joe King did that?

**Charles:** He needed to have different interest groups bought into the package. I think he used the committee chairs and their expertise—like Maria Cantwell with economic development, Ruth Fisher with transportation—

to build constituencies and to vent issues. I mean, if there were things that were killers in any of those proposals, any of those different pieces, he wanted it to be killed in the committee process—so that what came together finally was something that would actually work and had a lot of constituent support. So I think it was as simple as that.

**Diane:** We'd like to hear about those opposed to the GMA for context. Who were they and why did they oppose the GMA?

**Charles:** There were a lot of rural interests that were concerned about being subject to urban-types of requirements and so I think you saw that. There were some people who felt regulation was too much—critical areas ordinances and those requirements to preserve critical areas—that it infringed upon private property rights. So you had some people concerned about that. The bill did a pretty good job of balancing those. I mean there's a goal for protecting private property rights as well as there's a goal for preserving critical areas. And so while it might seem like conflicting goals, you've got to recognize that it's not one or the other, and you've got to work through it. I think local governments have been at the forefront of working through that—some stepping over the boundary [laughs]—and then there's reaction to that, but I think in general the GMA is a pretty rational piece of legislation.

### **Tape 1, Side 2**

**Charles:** Okay, and on that, there was opposition in the Senate to the bill because again, the Republicans had a one-vote majority. That was a pretty interesting dynamic of what happened. I think Jeannette Hayner, who was the majority leader in the Senate, did a great job of holding her caucus together with a one-vote majority. She recognized though that she had people in the Puget Sound region—she had Republicans, she saw the election of Bill Reams getting unelected, Brian Derdowski coming in. She needed to give something to some of her suburban Republican members, and so she recognized that something had to be done. And I think, if I remember right, Bob McCaslin was the committee chair and he didn't want the piece of legislation to move, and I think he got overridden by Jeannette Hayner. And they finally brought it to the Senate floor and voted on it and it moved out. So there was quite a bit of opposition by that group to the bill.

**Diane:** What did you think of the 1991 amendments to the GMA creating the growth management hearings boards?

**Charles:** Well, that was an interesting process to go through because after we went through the committees—the Steel Magnolias process in 1990—we did the same thing in 1991. And we came up with a great set of amendments, especially for the transportation side, because we had learned something. We had several great pieces of legislation—or components—that formed a transportation bill that was probably about 100 pages long by itself. So by the time it worked through the Transportation Committee, you had a fair amount of stuff there and it covered commute trip reduction, it covered access management for highways, and it made some changes to the goals; it made the transportation goals broader and more specific.

We actually had a piece in there that was trying to do something about these highways of statewide significance and defining state roles. So we had a lot of good stuff in there. It went to Joe King's Office to put it together—of course, all the committee chairs had put that stuff together.

The big issues were an enforcement mechanism. How would we enforce these? Was there a state review process? That's where the growth management hearings boards came from. What happened was the Senate said they wouldn't accept a bill that was longer than 100 pages and so everybody got the marching



orders, “Okay, we can only fit 100 pages worth of stuff in here,” so a lot of the stuff in transportation got stripped out. A lot of the good stuff, I thought.

Ruth Fisher decided to run the access management bill by itself and the commute trip reduction bill went by itself as well. So some of the parts got passed independently and not part of the growth management umbrella, but there was a constrained bill. So this constrained bill had in it the essential public facilities piece—that was an important piece—and then the growth management hearings boards. And the essential public facilities eventually became the basis upon which the highways of statewide significance and transportation facilities of statewide significance was built in the 1998 amendments.

**Diane:** How well do you think the growth management hearings boards are doing in carrying out their duties?

**Charles:** I think they’re doing pretty well. My opinion of it is that having three of them was important so that Eastern Washington could have their own and so that they could deal with their own issues. Having Puget Sound have their own because there are different issues made sense. I think that was a good thing that happened because if it had just one, Puget Sound would have tended to dominate and then the rest of the areas would have probably felt a little bit more left out.

**Diane:** What was the early process for local governments to begin their work under the GMA?

**Charles:** Well, in the early process there was a lot of education that took place. CTED (Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development) did a lot of training. WSDOT actually did some training, so we developed—in conjunction with CTED—training modules on transportation planning; what were the requirements of the Growth Management Act? We had joint conferences to foster people’s understanding of it. We did a lot of outreach in transportation with local governments to understand what RTPOs—regional transportation planning organizations—were all about and what were the benefits of them joining; putting together that grant program. So there was a lot of activity that was taking place and CTED was doing a lot of the technical work as well on critical area designation, trying to help people understand what that meant, what was the best available science in that area.

**Diane:** In terms of how the GMA is structured, what do you think are the most important parts of the law?

**Charles:** That there is a required plan. That the plan is the basis as effective law and that the plan guides the implementation actions, I think is probably the critical requirement. So just having that requirement, I think, is really important. From a transportation perspective, I think the regional transportation planning organizations—it’s hard to say they’re a requirement, they’re voluntary organizations. That has proven to be a very useful structure for people to coordinate their activities, and now it’s almost taken for granted that those organizations exist and that they have a useful function; so I think that that was pretty good.

**Diane:** How do you think the GMA has evolved and what significant things have local and state governments done to meet the goals the GMA was intended to achieve?

**Charles:** I’m going to use the Puget Sound region as an example here and the Puget Sound Regional Council of building the Vision 2020, which was a regional growth strategy adopted in 1995, or last updated in 1995. It is now being updated again. The idea of a centers-based approach—having growth concentrated in urban growth centers and then tying your infrastructure investments to supporting those centers. So this organization has spend a lot of energy in reinforcing that and it’s all GMA-based. So the idea that you’ve got an urban growth boundary—you want to encourage development within the urban growth boundary and so your infrastructure needs to support that growth.

**Diane:** Name the five most important successes of the GMA.

**Charles:** Preserving critical areas—reaching an agreement on how to do that—that applies to the entire state, so it's not just here. Getting urban growth boundaries that work, that communicate something to people—that you want urban growth within, you don't want urban growth outside. I think that's been a success. The base requirement of having a plan so that people could understand what's going on. The fourth success I'd say is some of the work on SEPA (State Environmental Policy Act)-GMA integration that took place. More predictability for the developer so that once you got a plan in place and something's consistent with that plan, it should be permitted. Why go through huge fights when you don't need to? Somewhat sorting out the essential public facilities provisions have been important, because it communicates that there are some things you've got to site, that you can't preclude. And I think that's an important element of planning.

**Diane:** If another state wanted to adopt a growth management law, what advice would you give them?

**Charles:** Well, be ready for a long-term commitment. This isn't something that can just be done within a four-year term and then overturned because that's just way too much disruption. You saw a little bit of that in Maryland with their smart growth. That was a Governor [Parris] Glendening thing and while the program has survived, it's different than what it was under Governor Glendening—a very different focus. So you've got to basically be committed to it for the long run. And that's why it's important that it be a compromise piece of legislation that people feel comfortable with on a broad scale, because if it's pretty radical, the next time there's an election shift, it's going to get tossed out.

**Diane:** How did CTED react to the GMA and how has CTED's role in administering the GMA changed over the years?

**Charles:** Well, I think CTED at first was pretty full of energy as far as implementing the act. CTED did a lot of research, there was money there for the agency to do research and for best practices and to help local governments figure out what to do. Some of that money got lean after a while, and it was more and more difficult for CTED to figure out what their role was because they couldn't afford to do a whole lot of outreach. They did as much as they could.

After 1995 the role seemed to be trying to defend the Growth Management Act and trying to keep it in one piece, because there were a lot of attempts to dismantle various pieces of it, which ultimately I don't think were successful. So you definitely saw a change in that and I think recently you've seen CTED starting to lead efforts to say, "It's been ten years, it's been 15 years, let's look at this and is it something that we need to change?"

**Diane:** What do you think are the most important amendments that have been made to the GMA over the years?

**Charles:** I like to think my level of service bill was the most important [laughter]. That was a hard fought battle, and I think that we still haven't figured out the full use of that yet. But I think it's a useful foundation to understand what's of statewide significance and what's not. I still don't think we've, in general, come to grips with that because we've got a locally administered program. The question is, What's the state's role in that locally administered program? And I think that's still got to be worked out beyond transportation, on other issues. I think that those are important.

And the buildable lands piece was an important change. It addressed the constituency that felt like they needed to be addressed, and so rather than ignoring that it provided a really good analysis. Do you have

enough land to accommodate the growth that you are envisioning inside the urban growth boundary? Because everybody's fear is that urban growth boundaries are going to lead to property values, and housing prices especially, that are way too high. So that's something that needs to be addressed.

**Diane:** Do you have any additional comments?

**Charles:** I think I'm out of it, but this has been a great. I'm glad that you guys are doing this because this is going to be valuable, I think. If anybody ever wants to take a look at the oral history, they're going to see some stories that went on. I've got some stories, but I can't say them on tape.

**Diane:** Do you want to say anything about the relationship between Puget Sound Regional Council and the GMA?

**Charles:** Well, the Puget Sound Regional Council is a four-county agency. The act requires multicounty planning policies in this region, recognizing the interdependence amongst the counties. Our Vision 2020 document ends up serving as the multicounty planning policy—it contains within it the multicounty planning policy that then cascades down and guides county-wide planning policies as well as local comp plans. So, in that respect, we're integrally involved in growth management and we are the regional transportation planning organization for this region. So we bring that function.

We review and certify comp plans for their consistency with the GMA and the consistency with the regional plan. We develop a regional transportation plan in cooperation with the local governments that has a lot of interplay between the local and regional level and brings the state to the table. So we are integrally a growth management agency.

**Diane:** Thank you.